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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 002040

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [MCAP](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIAN MILITARY OUTLINES AMBITIOUS PEACEKEEPING
TRAINING AGENDA

Classified By: Acting DCM James P. McNulty
for reasons in Sections 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) The Nigerian military plans to train 35,000 soldiers for peacekeeping missions by the end of 2009 and may be in a position to send forces to Chad, according to Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Center (NAPC) Commandant and Brigadier General Emeka Onwuamaegbu. He told PolMilOff during an October 30 visit to Jaji, Kaduna State, that he would like to expand training to include more national programs, including Disarmament, Demobilization, and Rehabilitation (DDR) training for the Niger Delta. Onwuamaegbu wants to transform the NAPC into a "tactical-level" National Center of Excellence catering to enlisted ranks. The school would fill what he described as "a gap" in regional "operational-level" training provided by the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Center in Ghana, which targets primarily officer ranks. Onwuamaegbu believes Nigeria's greatest weakness in peacekeeping operations (PKO) involves "logistics," especially management and manpower capacity, but not necessarily equipment. END SUMMARY.

POSSIBLE PEACEKEEPING ROLE IN CHAD

¶2. (C) Commandant Onwuamaegbu told PolMiloff in Jaji, Kaduna State, October 30 that the Nigerian Army Peacekeeping Center (NAPC) planned to train sixteen battalions, or 35,000 Nigerian soldiers, by the end of 2009, of which 32,500 soldiers have already completed training. He noted that Nigeria presently contributed four battalions to United Nations (UN) PKO missions in Sudan and two battalions in Liberia, with each battalion holding some 800 soldiers. Onwuamaegbu remarked that he anticipated "picking up two new PKO missions in Chad" next year. He commented, however, that Nigeria had reached its "maximum capacity" for PKO missions, because the GON has placed considerable "internal pressures" on the Army to serve in law-enforcement roles. He averred that "the police are internally over-stretched and incompetent, lacking capacity to fight even basic criminality." When asked whether these pressures included the Joint Task Force, Onwuamaegbu expressed hope that the amnesty process would succeed, if only to free up troops

within the Niger Delta for other Army missions. He remarked that the Nigerian Army often "feels pressure to move troops to the Niger Delta."

TACTICAL-LEVEL TRAINING CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

¶3. (C) Onwuamaegbu would like to expand NAPC's training focus to include "UN and national programs," including DDR courses.

He asserted that he would like to transform the NAPC into a "tactical-level" National Center of Excellence catering to enlisted ranks. The school would fill what he described as "a gap" in "operational-level" training provided by the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Center in Ghana, which targets primarily officer ranks. Onwuamaegbu stated that Qtargets primarily officer ranks. Onwuamaegbu stated that NAPC is negotiating with the GON to train Nigerian law enforcement personnel, who presently receive "classroom-only" training at the Abuja police headquarters. He would also like to train components of the ECOWAS Standby Force and expects to receive a group of civilians from the African Union in March 2010.

GREATEST WEAKNESS INVOLVES LOGISTICS

¶4. (C) Nigeria's greatest PKO weakness involves "logistics," said Onwuamaegbu. He clarified, however, that "We are management poor, not equipment poor." He cited Ghana's army as an example of an African military force superior in

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logistical manpower and capability. Onwuamaegbu returned from Darfur six weeks ago where he noted "gaps in training" in night operations tactics, use of Global Positioning Satellites and Night Vision Devices, convoy movements, and rough-terrain driving. NAPC has since added training modules in these areas.

BIOGRAPHIC NOTES

¶5. (SBU) Brigadier General Onwuamaegbu became NAPC Commandant following a massive reshuffle of senior Army leadership by Nigerian Army Chief Lieutenant General Abdulraman Danbazau in January 2009. He previously served as Director of Nigerian Army Public Relations. He told PolMiloff that he has served his entire Army career in public relations or training missions.

COMMENT

¶6. (C) Onwuamaegbu's desire to expand the NAPC's mission is most likely sincere, but unrealistic. Senior Nigerian military officers often declare to Embassy Defense Attache that "We are going to expand and take on new missions." However, NAPC has its hands full just increasing the number of rotations this year -- much less expanding into new missions.

¶7. (U) Embassy coordinated this telegram with ConGen Lagos.
SANDERS